MINUTES OF CENTRAL HOUSING FORUM MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10TH MAY 2017 AT 10.00 AM

IN HOUSING EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM, HOUSING CENTRE, BELFAST

PRESENT:	L Watson (Chairperson)	West Area
	R Crawford	West Belfast Area
	I McLaughlin	West Belfast Area
	V Rooney	South Down Area
	P McQuillan	Rural Residents Forum
	R McCaw	Causeway Area
	L Nelson	North Down & Ards Area
	I Hamilton	Disability Forum
	G Blevins	South Area
	K Murray	Mid Ulster Area
	A McAvoy	South & East Belfast Area
	S McDermott	South West Area
	C McDaid	Supporting Communities
	M Watt	Supporting Communities
	D Crawford	Housing Executive
	G Duffy	Housing Executive
IN ATTENDANCE:	K Porter	Housing Executive
	B McIlroy	NI Amenity Council
	D Muskett MBE	NI Amenity Council
	P Carland	Housing Executive
	K Henderson	Housing Executive
	C Savage	Housing Executive
APOLOGIES:	B Smith	Lisburn & Castlereagh Area
	M Cooper	South Antrim Area

MINUTES	ACTION

1.0 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 L Watson opened the meeting with a few words of welcome and a round of introductions was held; members were thanked for their prompt attendance given the early start and the number of items on the agenda.

2.0 PRESENTATION: BEST KEPT AWARDS SCHEME

2.1 L Watson welcomed and introduced Bridgeen McIlroy and Miss Doreen Muskett (MBE) from NI Amenity Council; a presentation on the Best Kept Awards Scheme was given and members noted the following:-

2.1.1 The aim of the programme is to inform, educate and promote environmental improvement, enhancement and conservation.

2.1.2 There are 4 categories for the Housing Area Awards:

- Best Kept Sheltered Housing Area
- Best Kept Small Housing Area (up to 50 dwellings)
- Belfast Kept Medium Housing Area (up to 200 dwellings)
- Best Kept Large House Area (over 200 dwellings)

2.1.3 Ellen McGowan Award for NI Housing Executive Entrants

2.1.4 Entries will be judged randomly over July and August period with a presentation event in Belfast on 10th October 2017.

2.2 In addition, members noted the judging criteria and highlighted benefits to Housing Executive and its tenants. Members also noted the broader public benefits.

2.3 Copies of the presentation will be sent with the minutes. Support Comm

3.0 HOUSING EXECUTIVE SOCIAL INVESTMENT UPDATE

3.1 L Watson introduced Paul Carland (Housing Executive Social Enterprise Liaison Manager) who provided an update to members on the Housing Executive's Social Housing Enterprise Strategy.

3.2 Members were reminded of the background and the objectives of the strategy and highlighted the current phase of the Social Housing Enterprise Awards Scheme which opened on 24th April 2017 and will run until 16th June 2017.

3.3 P Carland reported that the Housing Executive has provided funding of some £1.3 million since September 2015 and outlined the kinds of enterprises which have been supported. Members also noted how Housing Executive properties including flats, commercial units and even garage units can be used to support enterprise activities.

3.4 Members further noted since the introduction of the first Awards:

- 25 new Social Enterprises have been created
- 37 new jobs created
- 108 people have received training qualifications.

3.5 P Carland reported on the impact measurements that have been applied to evaluate investment over Tranche 1 and 2. The evaluation has involved external evaluation by CFNI and Community Bank NI, internal audit and 2 customer service evaluation visits. Members also noted that the Housing Executive has been recognised and commended for its work promoting and supporting enterprise activity.

3.6 P Carland outlined the awards available and highlighted the types of activities and enterprises that have received support to date. By way of illustration members viewed the Social Investment Team Video, (itself a product of a social enterprise).

4.0 HOUSING EXECUTIVE EARLY CAREERS PROGRAMME

4.1 L Watson welcomed and introduced Karen Henderson (Housing Executive) who provided a presentation on the Housing Executive Early Careers Programme.

4.2 Members noted the following elements which comprise the Programme:

- work placements and work experience
- apprenticeships for school leavers
- graduate placements
- year out and Summer placements
- other training opportunities.

as well as other job entry points to the Housing Executive.

4.3 Members noted that in the past Housing Executive has found it hard to attract interest in Job Fairs etc. and is re-evaluating how it reaches out beyond the specific recruitment processes i.e. for specific professional or technical posts.

4.4 Members further noted that:

- although Housing Executive cannot attract funding from the Apprentice Levy, it is committed to providing apprenticeships
- succession planning for the Housing Executive requires that people are attracted to and encouraged to remain in Housing Executive
- Investing in People Accreditation Silver Standard Awarded in 2015

- Housing Executive has received awards for its training programmes
- creation of the appropriate brand image to be attractive in the jobs and profession recruitment market.

4.5 K Henderson outlined a number of key steps that the Housing Executive will be taking going forward, including:

- specific branded promotional materials
- developing webpage
- participate in Skills NI in October 2017

4.6 I McLaughlin expressed continuing interest in the Housing Executive attracting applications and recruitment into housing related opportunities from local communities; K Henderson responded by highlighting that this programme and branding is aimed to extend the reach of the Housing Executive beyond the usual employment routes.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY SCREENING

5.1 L Watson welcomed and introduced Catherine Savage (Housing Executive Sustainable Development Unit).

5.2 C Savage reported that the Housing Executive has attained International Standard ISO14001 for its Environmental Management System. As part of that accreditation the Housing Executive is intending to adopt an environmental policy which contains the following elements.

5.2.1 Maintain an independently certified Environmental Management System.

5.2.2 Remain committed to compliance obligations and continual improvement.

5.2.3 Train all staff in sustainable development awareness and provide specialist training as needed.

5.2.4 Apply to reduce, re-use, recycle approach to waste streams.

5.2.5 Protect the environment to prevent pollution to the air, land and water.

5.2.6 Support and implement initiatives to develop sustainable local communities.

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5.2.7 Aim to encourage and influence customers, suppliers and 3rd parties to protect the environment and promote sustainable resource use.	
5.2.8 Enhance and protect biodiversity and ecosystems for our tenants across all Housing Executive landholdings.	
5.3 Members are asked to provide any comments and observations directly to C Savage by 31st May 2017 to catherine.savage@nihe.gov.uk.	Central Hsg Frm members
6.0 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	
6.1 Members noted that a number of new members have yet to be nominated.	
6.2 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.	
7.0 MATTERS ARISING	
7.1 (3.4) Digital Inclusion It was agreed to identify the appropriate time and format for additional IT training for Central Housing Forum members. C McDaid will follow up and advise members as part of the D4C Project.	C McDaid
In addition, G Duffy outlined a number of options Housing Executive is considering to utilise information technology for making payments to HCN reps. G Duffy will update accordingly.	G Duffy
7.2 (5.1) House Sales Strategy Nothing further at present.	
7.3 (5.3) Empty Homes Strategy Nothing further at present.	
7.4 (5.3) Pen Pics Nearly all completed; awaiting new members to be appointed etc.	C McDaid
7.5 (5.7) Housing Executive Community Grants G Duffy reported that the online form has now been tweaked and sent to Area Offices.	

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7.6	(5.10) Social Enterprise Strategy - Social Clauses Members noted that this item will be on the June meeting agenda. I McLaughlin requested that the presentation should include specific figures for the numbers of apprenticeships/ training opportunities etc. that have been made available under 'social clauses'. D Crawford will liaise directly with W Erwin accordingly.	D Crawford
7.7	(5.11) Response Maintenance Core Group Meetings Members noted that I Hamilton and V Rooney were nominated to sit on any Working Group to be established.	V Rooney I Hamilton
7.8	(7.1.6) Scrutiny Panel Information Exchange C McDaid distributed a table outlining the topics and progress of each of the Area Scrutiny Panels for information.	
8.0	COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE	
8.1	D Crawford provided an update on the progress of the strategy and following a brief discussion it was agreed to set a specific time aside for the Central Housing Forum to consider the Strategy in detail; date agreed as Wednesday 7th June 2017 at a venue to be decided.	D Crawford
9.0	FORUMS UPDATE	
9.1	Rural Residents Forum P McQuillan provided an outline of the business of the Forum at its most recent meeting including:-	
9.1.1	Latent demand testing in Dungiven and Fermanagh.	
9.1.2	Update on Affordable Warmth Scheme.	
9.1.3	Rural unfitness.	
9.1.4	Potential service level agreement with Heatsmart.	
9.1.5	Impact of Welfare Reform in rural communities.	
9.1.6	Launch of Rural Community Awards.	
9.2	Strategic Cohesion Forum I McLaughlin provided an update on The Forum visit to Regnerate, Portadown looking at a range of matters including bonfire management innovations and it was generally regarded to be a very useful engagement. Next meeting will be considering issues around regeneration at interfaces.	

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9.3	Disability Forum Next meeting is Thursday 11th May 2017.	
10.0	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
10.1	C McDaid highlighted recognition being given to the work on Digital Inclusion and thanked R McCaw and S McDonald for their involvement.	
10.2	C McDaid highlighted potential engagement with the Pensioners Forum and will update members subsequently.	C McDaid
10.3	C McDaid reported that TPAS (England) has invited Supporting Communities and a rep to attend a Comms Hero Conference event in London on 23rd May 2017. It was agreed that L Watson and D Crawford should attend on behalf of Central Housing Forum.	
10.4	D Crawford thanked K Murray and P McQuillan for their involvement in the Customer Service Excellence evaluation process.	
11.0	**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**	
11.1	**The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 7th June 2017 commencing at 10.30 am to 1.00 pm venue to be decided, to discuss the draft Community Involvement Strategy.**	
11.2	**The next full meeting will be held on Wednesday 14th June 2017 at 10.30 am in Supporting Communities Headquarters, Ballymena.**	